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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7371
INFO RUCNFRG/FRG COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHUNV/USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA PRIORITY 0245
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0446
RHMFISS/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMCSUU/FBI WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
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STATE FOR ISN AND EUR/AGS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/06/2017
TAGS: [MNUC](#) [PARM](#) [ETTC](#) [PTER](#) [ENRG](#) [GM](#)
SUBJECT: GERMAN AUTHORITIES INVESTIGATING URANIUM PELLETS
FOUND ON PRIVATE PROPERTY IN LOWER SAXONY

REF: A. OSC EUP20070302085005

[1](#)B. OSC EUP20070301085011

[1](#)C. OSC EUP20070228474002

[1](#)D. OSC EUP20070228085017

Classified By: Minister-Counselor for Economic Affairs Robert F.Cekuta
, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Pursuing recent press reports, the Mission has been in contact with German officials regarding the discovery of uranium pellets in a private citizen's yard in Lauenfoerde, Germany. The following information is based on discussions with representatives of the German Federal Office of Criminal Investigation (BKA) as well as on open-source reporting.

[1](#)2. (C) On March 2 Legatt contacted the BKA unit responsible for nuclear-related crimes concerning news reports (refs) that German officials had recovered uranium pellets from a private garden in Lauenfoerde, Lower Saxony, February 22. The BKA confirmed that state officials from Lower Saxony had confiscated the uranium pellets, which were professionally packed and emitted low levels of alpha radiation. Despite the radiation, authorities report the pellets posed little danger to public health. The owner of the property where the uranium was found had notified the Federal Chancellery February 17 through a letter written by his attorney that the uranium was in his yard. According to the BKA, the man had contacted local police in the 1990's about the uranium, but the local authorities never considered his story credible. Against the backdrop of numerous reports by the property owner to the police about nuclear material smuggling, the local police judged his story implausible and the man unreliable. Now, however, that authorities have found the uranium pellets in his yard, the property owner is under investigation by local police from the Holzminden District, where Lauenfoerde is located. (Note: under German law, storing nuclear fuel without a permit is a criminal offense, carrying a maximum prison sentence of five years. End note.)

[1](#)2. (C) The BKA told Legatt it has had no recent reports of stolen or missing uranium. German authorities have notified the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) about the recovered pellets and requested assistance in matching them to any known stolen or missing uranium. The IAEA has not yet reported back to the German Government.

¶3. (C) BKA sources report local police are responsible for the investigation and have the situation under control. Although it is still unclear how the man obtained the uranium pellets in the first place, German authorities report the pellets have been secured and pose no threat to the public health or safety.

¶4. (U) Mission Germany will continue to monitor this case and report significant new information/developments.

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